

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

An intuitive graphical user interface is based upon a geographic map structure, and includes a system for controlling remote external electronic devices. In the defined graphical user interface, each space of the geographic map structure is rendered on a touch screen display as a graphic image of a geographic space. Within each space are colored cartoon-like icons called "objects" which can be selected and manipulated by the user. Certain objects, referred to as portals, transport the user from one space to another space when Selected. Other objects, referred to as buttons, perform associated actions or functions when Selected. The graphical user interface is displayed on a hand-held display device used to control remote devices. Each remote electronic device transmits a user interface program object that defines a graphical user interface to the display device. The hand-held display devices displays the graphical user interface associated with the remote device when a user selects an icon associated with the remote device on the display device's touch screen display.